

INFORMATION REPORT

December 29, 2005

SECY-05-0236

For: The Commissioners
From: William M. Dean, Assistant for Operations, Office of the EDO /RA/
Subject: WEEKLY INFORMATION REPORT - WEEK ENDING
DECEMBER 16, 2005

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*No input this week.

/RA Thomas A. Bergman, Acting for/

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Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation (NRR)
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 16, 2005

Regulatory Endorsement Meeting with the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)

On December 13, 2005, the staff met with representatives of the ASME Board of Nuclear Codes and Standards to discuss the objectives of the newly formed Task Group on Regulatory Endorsement (TGRE) and the TGRE recommendations on endorsement of ASME codes and standards in NRC regulations and regulatory guides. The TGRE representatives made specific proposals for streamlining 10 CFR 50.55a and for the endorsement of various ASME codes and standards. Plans were tentatively made to meet again in approximately 4 months to discuss specific proposals in greater detail.

Public Service Electric & Gas (PSEG) Nuclear LLC - Salem Fire Suppression System Meeting

On December 13, 2005, the staff met with PSEG to discuss the carbon dioxide (CO₂) fire suppression system at Salem Nuclear Generating Station. The licensee requested a license amendment to address the lower concentration and hold time, but withdrew the request when the staff expressed concerns that PSEG had not adequately justified the lower concentration, not discussed its effect on Appendix R exemptions, and did not address CO₂ migration. In a letter dated September 29, 2005, the staff requested a meeting to discuss the concerns with the application and the licensee's plans to return the system to conform with its licensing basis. The licensee discussed the causes of the deficiency, the steps they have taken to improve performance, and the compensatory measures that are in place to ensure plant safety. The licensee stressed that permanently resolving this issue is one of the top priorities at Salem. The licensee is evaluating multiple solution paths and plans to select a path in March of 2006.

Vermont Yankee Extended Power Uprate - Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards/Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACRS) Meetings

The staff and Entergy representatives briefed the ACRS Subcommittee on Power Uprates, in two separate meetings, on the proposed extended power uprate for Vermont Yankee. The first meeting was held on November 15 and 16 in Brattleboro, Vermont, and included a presentation on transient testing, credit for containment overpressure for emergency core cooling pumps' net positive suction head, and the NRC summer 2004 engineering inspection results. A significant portion of this meeting was devoted to public comments. Many of the comments expressed a need for an independent safety assessment. The second ACRS Subcommittee meeting was held on November 29 and 30 at NRC Headquarters. This meeting covered the review areas that were not discussed during the first meeting including steam dryer integrity and the analytical methods and codes used by Entergy's fuel vendor, General Electric.

On December 7, 2005, the staff and Entergy representatives briefed the ACRS Full Committee on the proposed power uprate. The staff's presentation included the deterministic evaluation and risk evaluation pertaining to the request to credit containment overpressure. Entergy's presentation included the steam dryer analysis. On December 10, 2005, the ACRS voted to recommend tentative approval of the Vermont Yankee power uprate, subject to the completion of its final draft report. The ACRS expects to issue the final report before December 31, 2005.

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ENCLOSURE A

RIS 2003-18, Supplement 2, "Use of Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) 99-01, Methodology for Development of Emergency Action Levels" Revision 4, Dated January 2003

On December 12, 2005, the staff issued the subject RIS, Supplement 2. The purposes of this supplement are to (1) supercede previously issued information in RIS 2003-18 and Supplement 1 regarding obtaining and documenting State and local governmental authority agreement to emergency action level (EAL) changes, (2) provide more examples of EAL *differences* and *deviations*, as identified in reviews of EAL submittals, to ensure the consistency of future licensee EAL submittals and/or the consistency of licensee documentation for EAL changes made under 10 CFR 50.54(q), and (3) provide additional guidance on EAL upgrades from NUMARC/NESP-007 EALs to NEI 99-01 EALs.

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Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NMSS)
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Draft Interim Guidance on Concentration Averaging for DOE Waste Determinations Released

On December 5, 2005, the Division of Waste Management and Environmental Protection (DWMEP) issued draft interim guidance on concentration averaging for public comment. DWMEP is currently in the process of developing a Standard Review Plan (SRP) to provide guidance to NRC staff on reviews of waste determinations submitted by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). The draft SRP is expected to be issued in late 2006 and will include guidance on evaluating the application of concentration averaging principles in cases specific to the types of waste and situations typically encountered in waste determinations. Because several stakeholders are interested in obtaining NRC guidance on concentration averaging as soon as practicable, the NRC staff issued the draft interim guidance. The public comment period ends January 31, 2006.

DOE Audit of Plutonium Vitrification Project Observation

On December 5-9, 2005, staff observed a DOE audit of the Savannah River National Laboratory Plutonium Vitrification Project. The DOE audit was conducted by the DOE Office of Environmental Management and the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management. The purpose of the Plutonium Vitrification Project is to develop a disposition waste form for 13 metric tons of plutonium that has high contaminant levels. The audit evaluated the project activities that provide input to the planned repository license application and the adequacy and effectiveness of the quality assurance program implementation.

Office of Nuclear Regulatory Research (RES)
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 16, 2005

Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) Piping & Bolting and Phased Array (PA) Non-Destructive Examination (NDE) Conference

On December 5-8, 2005, staff participated in the subject conference in Florida. NDE techniques were discussed, particularly PA technologies which allow increased speed of examinations, reduced worker dose, and improved examination coverage where access is difficult. RES is evaluating PA techniques for components that currently cannot be inspected reliably with conventional NDE.

Human Performance Measures Workshop

On December 6-8, 2005, staff and Idaho National Laboratory staff hosted the subject workshop in Charleston, South Carolina. The workshop was attended by the Institute for Nuclear Power Operations, Electric Power Research Institute, and various utilities. The workshop provided a forum for information exchange of industry best practices in the area of human performance and information on the NRC's progress in developing a technical basis for development of measures of human performance.

Pebble Bed Modular Reactor (PMBR) Pre-Application Process Plans Meeting

On December 12, 2005, staff participated in the subject public meeting with PBMR (Pty) Ltd to discuss future informational sessions, white papers, and workshops in preparation for a design certification application for a pebble-bed gas-cooled reactor. An application is anticipated in early 2008.

Office of Nuclear Security and Incident Response (NSIR)
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 16, 2005

Preliminary Notifications

1. PNO-II-05-013, Southern Nuclear Operating Company Inc. Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Unit 2 - VOGTLE UNIT 2 SHUTDOWN TO REPAIR RHR PIPE LEAK.
2. PNO-I-05-029, Froehling & Robertson, Inc. - PORTABLE DENSITY GAUGE REPORTED MISSING.
3. PNO-I-05-029A, Froehling & Robertson, Inc. - PORTABLE DENSITY GAUGE RECOVERED AND SECURED.

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Office of Information Services (OIS)
Items of Interest
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Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and Privacy Act Requests Received During the Period of
December 9 through December 15, 2005:

Alternative Mechanisms for Land Use Restrictions, memo from D. Michaels, OGC, to F. Cameron, OGC, dated August 27, 1993	FOIA/PA-2006-0050
OI Reports 1-2003-046 & 1-2003-046S, exhibits; results of Enforcement Conference, transcripts	FOIA/PA-2006-0051
South Texas Project Nuclear Operating Company (STPNOC), Comprehensive Cultural Assessments or other evaluations to assess safety conscious work environment since January 1, 2004, all records	FOIA/PA-2006-0052
Pinkerton Government Services or Securitas Inc., enforcement actions, allegations, investigations, all records	FOIA/PA-2006-0053
Contract No. NRC-10-04-413, Urban/Meridian Joint Venture, technical proposal, cost proposal, SOW, previous contract, performance evaluations	FOIA/PA-2006-0054
Differing Professional Opinion (DPO) document on Emergency Planning	FOIA/PA-2006-0055
Contractor vouchers, comparison of due dates vs. actual signed dates, FY 05, signed by named individual	FOIA/PA-2006-0056
OI Case 1-2003-034, all records	FOIA/PA-2006-0057

Office of Human Resources (HR)
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 16, 2005

Arrival		
COOPER, LA'TOYA	STUDENT CLERK	NMSS
LINGAM, SIVA	PROJECT MANAGER	NRR
QUINN, LAURA M.	GENERAL SCIENTIST	NRR
TOMS, GERALD D.	CONSULTANT	NSIR
WENGERT, THOMAS	PROJECT MANAGER	NRR
YADAV, PRIYA P.	GENERAL ENGINEER	NMSS
Departures		
DUFFY, MELISSA L.	ATTORNEY	OGC
ESELGROTH, PETER	CONSULTANT	EDO
GRIMMEL, BRADFORD S.	PROJECT ENGINEER	NRR
JOHNSON, WILLIAM D.	CONSULTANT	EDO
REINHART, FREDERICK M.	BRANCH CHIEF	NRR

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Office of the Secretary (SECY)
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 16, 2005

Document Released to Public	Date	Subject
Decision Documents		
1. COMSECY-05-0057	11/23/05	Fourth Annual Report - Broadcasting of Commission Meetings Over the Internet
SRM-COMSECY-05-0057	12/13/05	(same)
Commission Voting Record- 05-0057	12/13/05	(same)
Information Papers		
1. SECY-05-0222	12/12/05	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending November 25, 2005
2. SECY-05-0223	12/14/05	Weekly Information Report - Week Ending December 2, 2005
Memoranda		
1. M051212A	12/12/05	Staff Requirements - Affirmation Session: I. SECY-05-0216 - Exelon Generation Company, LLC (Early Site Permit for Clinton Site)
2. M051130	12/15/05	Staff Requirements - Briefing on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program

Commission Correspondence

1. Letter to Senators James Inhofe and James Jeffords, dated December 6, 2005, response to request for information regarding NRC's preparation and response to Hurricane Katrina.

Federal Register Notices Issued

1. Establishment of Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, American Energy Company, LLC (Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station), Docket No. 50-0219-LR, ASLBP No. 06-844-01-LR.
2. Denial of Petition for rulemaking, 10 CFR Part 50, Docket No. PRM-50-79, Mr. Lawrence T. Christian, et al.

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3. Petition for rulemaking; request for comment, PRM-31-5, 10 CFR Part 31, Organization of Agreement States.
4. Petition for rulemaking: PRM-35-18, Peter Crane.

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Region II (RII)
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Region II Management Retreat

On December 13-14, 2005, the Regional Administrator, all regional Senior Managers and Branch Chiefs attended the Region II semi-annual Management Retreat entitled "Preparing for Success" at the Sheraton Read House Hotel in Chattanooga, TN. During this meeting the regional strategy for the next six months was discussed.

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Region III (RIII)
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Perry Performance Improvement Initiative Meeting

On December 14, 2005, Region III staff members met with representatives of FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co. in Painesville, OH, to discuss the preliminary findings of an NRC inspection on Phase 2 of the Perry Improvement Initiative. The licensee developed Phase 2 of its performance improvement program to address issues raised in the broad NRC inspection earlier this year at the Perry Nuclear Plant under Manual Chapter 95003. The meeting reviewed the adequacy of the improvement plan itself and did not focus on the implementation of the plan or its current status which will be covered in future inspections.

Meeting on offsite migration of tritium in groundwater at Braidwood

On December 12, 2005, Region III staff members participated in a meeting at the Braidwood Nuclear Power Station with residents who live near the plant where elevated tritium measurements have been identified on and off the site. In addition to measurable tritium in groundwater, Exelon Generation Co. measured low levels of tritium in one residential drinking water well. Region III is monitoring the licensee's response to the tritium measurements and has collected well and groundwater samples to have an independent analysis performed. The licensee anticipates additional meetings with the residents to keep them informed of ongoing sampling activities and remediation plans.

Region IV (RIV)
Items of Interest
Week Ending December 16, 2005

Diablo Canyon Public Meeting

On December 14, 2005, the staff held a Category 3 meeting in San Luis Obispo, California, with Pacific Gas and Electric Company to provide members of the community an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments on issues regarding the Diablo Canyon Power Plant. The licensee presented an overview of their independent spent fuel storage installation project and NRC staff provided a brief description of related inspection activities. The meeting was attended by approximately 120 members of the public, public interest groups, local media, and county supervision.

Columbia Public Meeting

On December 15, 2005, a public meeting was held at the Region IV office between the NRC and Energy Northwest to discuss issues at the Columbia Generating Station. Items discussed included human performance and equipment reliability issues. The licensee presented an overview of their plan to improve human performance which included reinforcing expectations, monitoring by managers and supervisors, performance monitoring and corrective actions. The licensee also presented a brief overview of their equipment reliability improvement plan.

Callaway Plant Management Change Announcement

Ameren Corporation has announced that Mr. Tim E. Herrmann will be promoted to Vice President of Engineering at the AmerenUE Callaway Nuclear Plant, effective January 1, 2006. Mr. Herrmann will be responsible for all engineering activities at the Callaway Plant, including nuclear regulatory affairs, plant engineering, and design/projects. This position was created as a result of an independent review team recommendation to the board of directors to improve managerial bench strength. Mr. Herrmann joined AmerenUE in 1981 and most recently served as Manager of Engineering Services where he led the initiative to replace Callaway Plant's steam generators and turbine generator.

Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards (ACRS)/
Advisory Committee on Nuclear Waste (ACNW)
Items of Interest
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As a result of its 165th meeting (November 14-16, 2005), the ACNW issued letters and reports on the following subjects.

Date	Subject
December 9, 2005	Development of a Standard Review Plan for U.S. Department of Energy Waste Determinations
December 9, 2005	Review of the NRC Program on the Risk from Igneous Activity at the Proposed Yucca Mountain Repository

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